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LA RENAISSANCE EN ITALIE ET EN FRANCE À L'ÉPOQUE DE CHARLES VIII. Ouvrage publié sous la direction et avec le concours de *M. Paul d'Albert de Luynes et de Chevreuse, Duc de Chaulnes*, par M. EUGÈNE MÜNTZ, et illustré de 300 gravures dans le texte et de 38 planches tirées à part. 4to, pp. xi-560. Paris, 1885, Firmin-Didot.

The literary and artistic developments of the early Renaissance have never been treated more charmingly than in this beautiful volume, which delights the eye and mind both of the general reader and of the specialist. Its publication is due to the initiative of a princely patron of art and learning, the Duc de Chaulnes, whose premature death prevented the completion of his section of the work. The central idea of the joint publication was to be the expedition of Charles VIII to Italy. In order to show to what extent France, at the close of the xv century, was indebted to Italy in the Arts and in Literature; and in order to appreciate the political relations of the two countries at that time; it was necessary to go back in the course of events to the historical epoch in Italy when the first steps of that great movement we call the Renaissance were taken. In carrying out this plan of coöperation it soon became necessary to divide the work, the Duc de Chaulnes taking charge of the diplomatic and military history of the expedition, and M. Müntz of the literary and artistic: the latter part of the work is before us: "The expedition of Charles VIII to Italy," says M. Müntz, "is, with the discovery of America, the capital event of the second half of the fifteenth century, the point of departure, for our country, of a new era, and, for Italy, of a decay whose effects are still felt even to-day." M. Müntz is no blind admirer of the Renaissance, but appreciates the higher qualities displayed in Italy during the preceding centuries. In the xv century "individualism, as Burckhart has demonstrated, everywhere took the place of the great national or religious efforts, of the community of aspirations, of the spirit of discipline" which were characteristics of the Middle Ages. Naturalism and Classicism are the two leading currents which M. Müntz sees in the Renaissance, though he does not recognize so complete a change, so great a birth throughout the human consciousness, as would seem warranted for a period when the Humanistic principle, supreme for the time, created a new universe of thought: he thinks of it more as a gradual and peaceful propaganda, a progressive transformation.

At the start M. Müntz, in studying the governing spirit of the Renaissance, opposes himself to the usual idea that the Paganizing mania which invaded every branch of thought—even the sacred field of religion—indicated Pagan religious aspirations, or any hostility to Christianity. According to him, the Catholic Church, understanding the advantages of an alliance

with the new movement, led it by the hand. That it did so is, of course, a fact; but it is also a fact that, up to the reform movement of the Council of Trent, the spirit of the Church was far from being a saintly one: had there not been a Reformation within as well as without the Catholic Church, the social result would have been quite different. Still, M. Müntz brings forward, in support of his opinion, a goodly array of proof which his intimate acquaintance with the period makes formidable. For him Lorenzo de' Medici is the type of a reconciliation of Christianity and Antiquity. That complete "eclipse of the moral sense," that abandoned revelling in crime which revolts us in so many leading men of the Renaissance in Italy, he seeks to identify as well with the mediæval period. In the political order M. Müntz recognizes the complete disappearance in the xv century of all feeling of patriotism. The luxury which invaded all upper classes at this time made it possible for private patronage to be generously given to artists. A good picture is given of the entire social condition of Italy, the occupations and fêtes; of the state of letters and sciences; of the humanists, their immense popularity and final insipid imitation of antique models; of the advance in pedagogics,—the love of books and the foundation of libraries.

But I cannot dwell long on this portion of the volume, however attractive, and must pass to the pages devoted to the Fine Arts. In a couple of chapters the general spirit of the early Renaissance is defined; "for a certain number of general principles presided over the development of Italian civilization of the xv century and gave it that unity which characterizes it." The elements which entered into the education of the artist; the duration and stages of his apprenticeship; his opportunities for studying from nature, from the antique (especially through plaster casts), and from the great masters of his own and preceding generations: then the life he led after entering on his career; his position in society; the conditions that governed his patronage, and the competition with rival artists—all this is treated in chapter vi: in the following chapter, the aspirations, teachings, technical processes, choice of subjects, style and inspiration of the new school of artists. M. Müntz remarks that, in general, "the Scriptures and Lives of Saints continue to inspire the immense majority of works of art: the proportion of profane compositions is very small compared with the imposing array of religious compositions. . . . If the subjects, however, have not varied, the manner of conceiving them has become deeply modified. The triumph of realism brought with it the disappearance of the allegoric and symbolical element as the Middle Ages had conceived it. The great biblical cycles, elaborated by Ghiberti in his second gate, by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Campo Santo at Pisa, and by the painters of the Sistine Chapel, are no longer anything but more or less animated or attractive narrations."

Even though this is a time when the study of man is brought into honor, it is a peculiar fact that contemporary events are almost never represented in art: were it not for the numerous portraits and the realistic treatment of religious subjects we should be at a loss to know much about the peculiar physiognomy of the time.

The most singular feature about the revolution in architecture is the sudden casting away of the Gothic and all previous forms, and the immediate substitution, without transition, of a complete architectural system modelled on the antique. In speaking of the new style in sculpture headed by Donatello, M. Müntz writes some eloquent lines on this great artist who is, and deservedly so, his great favorite. Many interesting pages are given to the fascinating subject of miniature painting, a subject which writers on art are too apt to overlook in treating of this period. Keramics; wood and ivory carving; mosaics, nielli and wood-engraving are all spoken of in turn, at the close of the first half of the volume.

We cannot follow M. Müntz in the chapters, where, in a style full of charm, he takes up successively and in topographical order the different art-schools of Italy, when, after the first flush of the revival "distinct schools came into being . . . and the same idea appears varied in a thousand ways." Milan, with its artistic sterility and imported artists, and finally with its Bramante and Leonardo: Padua with Petrarch and Mantegna: Verona with Pisanello: Venice with the Bellini, Antonello, and the Lombardi: Ferrara, Mantua, Bologna, Urbino with Piero della Francesca—are all rapidly enumerated. But the centre is of course Tuscany, and Florence, next to which comes Rome.

The third book treats of the Renaissance in France. The latter half of the fifteenth century was for France a time of great decline in all the arts. In architecture the Gothic style had reached the lowest stage of bad taste, and sculpture had in general become weak and affected, while painting hardly existed at all as an art, except in tapestries. What a contrast to the thirteenth century when France stood at the head of the artistic advance! The only exceptions were, in sculpture the school of Dijon and Michel Colombe, and in painting Jehan Fouquet; who may be termed the precursors of the Renaissance in France, and were certainly great artists. But, although we must confess that, up to the time of the expedition of Charles VIII in 1494, France had not undergone any revolution in the Fine Arts, it is a great mistake to diminish the originality of the art which arose there after this date, and flourished during the sixteenth century. In both architecture and sculpture France merits a foremost place, next to Italy, for she realized a far more classic and pure form of the Renaissance than Germany. The student of the great French châteaux and of the sculptures of Jean Goujon cannot fail to see how much indivi-

duality and national character art retained, though its inspiration did come from beyond the Alps.

As a thoughtful study of Renaissance art in all its phases and in its broadest relations to literature and to general culture, this book is of the highest interest, and a model in its field. A notice of it would be incomplete without warm praise of the illustrations, which are chosen with the greatest care and discrimination, and are admirably executed. There is a decided advance on the usual range of selection, and importance is given to original drawings and to miniature-painting.

A. L. FROTHINGHAM, Jr.

SYRIAN STONE-LORE; or, THE MONUMENTAL HISTORY OF PALESTINE. By CLAUDE REIGNIER CONDER, R. E., Author of *Tent Work in Palestine, Heth and Moab, etc.* Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Pp. XIV, 472. London, 1886, Richard Bentley and Son.

Captain Conder has taken an attractive subject, and written a book which will no doubt find a good many readers. It contains ten chapters, and treats, in succession, of Canaanites, Phenicians, Hebrews, Jews and Samaritans, The Greek Age, The Herodian Age, The Roman Age, The Byzantine Age, The Arab Conquest, and The Crusaders. It is furnished with three maps, twenty-nine illustrations, and an index. The dedication is to Prince Albert Victor of Wales. It is plainly intended, not merely by the author, but by the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, to be a standard manual, for popular use. Apart, then, from the fact that the author courteously invites criticism and correction, it is proper that the book should be examined with great freedom.

No depreciation of Captain Conder's services is involved in the statement that those writings, and parts of writings, in which he has dealt with his own travels and immediate observations are of greater value than those in which he has entered upon more general discussions. The sagacity, endurance and executive power without which there can be no valuable explorations, do not necessarily imply the accurate, detailed and patient scholarship, the familiarity with scientific discussions and the trained judgment which must be brought to bear on the tentative results of the explorer. Rarely are these two sets of qualities combined in one man. They were, in Dr. Edward Robinson. They are not, in Captain Conder.

This makes it all the more unfortunate that he should have undertaken a work of so wide a scope as the present. The field is too large for any one archæologist; it is too large even for most compilers; and far too large